

**AMENDMENT AND PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME
REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (RCE)****Attorney Docket No.****Case 7073****Patent Application Serial No. 10/802,474****Reply to Office Action mailed October 28, 2005****Art Unit 3749****Confirmation No. 5322****Page 3****Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A rigid structure comprised of two halves, arcuate grooves configured along the inner face of each of the two halves such that when the two halves are mated, parallel and spaced apertures are formed to hold a series of tubes in an aligned and fixed spaced relationship, each tube being fitted with a tube shield mounted adjacent the two halves, and wherein the two halves are sized to overlap an adjacent portion of the tube shield thereby covering any gaps created therebetween.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The rigid structure according to claim 1, in which each arcuate groove includes a central portion projecting toward the tube and a longitudinal end portion overlapping the adjacent portion of the tube shield.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The rigid structure according to claim 1, including clamping means for securing the two halves around each tube and adjacent portion of the tube shield.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The rigid structure according to claim 1, in which the tube shield is welded to at least one of the two halves.

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Claim 5 (previously presented): The rigid structure according to claim 1, in which a retainer shield covers the front end of the two halves, and the retainer shield is sized to overlap the adjacent portion of the tube shield.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The rigid structure according to claim 5, in which the retainer shield is welded to at least one of the two halves.

Claim 7 (previously presented): In combination, a row of vertical lengths of essentially parallel tubes having a side periodically subjected to the action of a stream of blowing fluid cleaning medium, spaced upper and lower tube shields mounted on said side of each tube, a rigid structure disposed between the upper and lower tube shields and being comprised of two halves positioned on opposite sides of the tube row, each half having an inner face shaped with semicircular grooves such that when the two halves are mated, parallel and spaced apertures are formed to hold the tubes in an aligned and fixed spaced relationship, and wherein the two halves are sized to overlap adjacent portions of the tube shields thereby covering any gaps created therebetween that would expose said side of each tube to the action of the fluid cleaning medium.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 7, in which the inner face is formed with a central portion projecting toward the tubes, and longitudinal end portions overlapping the adjacent portions of the tube shields.

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Claim 9 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 7, including clamping means for securing the two halves around the tubes and adjacent portions of the tube shields.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 7, in which the tube shields are welded to at least one of the two halves.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The combination according to claim 7, in which a retainer shield covers the a front end of the two halves, and the retainer shield is sized to overlap the adjacent portions of the tube shields.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 11, in which the retainer shield is welded to at least one of the two halves.